R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 020 709 FL 000 886

REPORT OF HOWARD LEE NOSTRAND, CHAIRMAN OF THE 1967-68 COMMITTEE ON A LEVEL-II STANDARD FOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT (19TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES, CARROLL COLLEGE, APRIL 19-20, 1968).

BY- NOSTRAND, HOWARD LEE

PUB DATE APR 68

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.76 17P.

DESCRIPTORS- *CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING, *SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING, *ACADEMIC STANDARDS, *LANGUAGE LEARNING LEVELS, *CULTURAL AWARENESS, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, PROGRAM COORDINATION, TEACHING METHODS, LANGUAGE MATERIALS, BIBLIOGRAPHIES, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, AUDIOLINGUAL METHODS, CULTURAL ENRICHMENT, MODERN LANGUAGES, SOCIAL STRUCTURE,

STANDARDS ARE PROPOSED FOR STUDENT UNDERSTANDING IN THE SOCIOCULTURAL COMPONENTS OF A LEVEL II LANGUAGE COURSE, OR AFTER THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF A LANGUAGE IN HIGH SCHOOL. BRIEF STATEMENTS OF STANDARDS FOR LEVELS I, III, AND IV ARE PROVIDED AS BACKGROUND. IT IS ASSUMED THAT NO ENGLISH WILL BE USED IN CLASS, AND THAT CULTURAL INSIGHTS WILL BE TAUGHT BY AUDIOLINGUAL DIALOGS, HOMEWORK, SIMPLE BUT GOOD LITERATURE, AND OPTIONAL READING. MINIMAL AND DESIRABLE STANDARDS ARE LISTED FOR EACH LEVEL OF LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR I-IV, AND A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY IS INCLUDED. (AF)

ED020709

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

19th ANNUAL MEETING

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES

APRIL 19-20, 1968 CARROLL COLLEGE

REPORT OF HOWARD LEE NOSTRAND, CHAIRMAN OF THE 1967-68 COMMITTEE ON A LEVEL-II STANDARD FOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT.

Foreign-language teachers in the United States owe an apology to students who are thwarted by indefensible sequences--an up-staircase whose risers vary from two inches to three feet. We have it in our power to design a well-articulated sequence within any one school or college; to do so between institutions, some agreement becomes necessary as the mobility of the population causes more and more students to change schools.

One logical road toward a consensus is to propose, for voluntary adoption by schools and colleges, a standard of achievement expected of the learner at each successive level. For the purpose of articulating such a sequence of standards, the "terminal behavior" to be expected at each level may be subdivided into seven components: the four language skills; language analysis; acquaintance with the foreign people's literature; and understanding of the people's culture and social structure.

The present report proposes a standard for just the last-mentioned (sociocultural) component, and at just one level of student achievement, namely, "Level II" -- i.e., what the learner should be able to do after two high-school years of a

FL 000 888

language (two Carnegie units) or whatever length of time he may need at a lower or a higher age to reach the same proficiency.

Not only will learners of different ages progress at different average rates -- and ideally, both the pace and the sequence of instruction will be individualized for each learner-- but we must expect different profiles of proficiency for the several age groups and for individual learners. In general, young children will excel in imitating speech spontaneously; older learners will excel in reading, writing, and analyzing.

We cannot say at present how much understanding of a culture can be taught along with the language on a given "Level" because we simply have not tried any sufficiently planned entry, re-entry and sequential development of socio-cultural content. The Washington (State) Foreign Language Program is working on this problem with demonstration classes which are using the course developed at Saint-Cloud and published by Chilton, Voix et Images de France.

What ultimately proves feasible at each Level will depend on how important we collectively judge cross-cultural understanding to be. It will also depend on how well this achievement stimulates motivation to study the language and literature, and how well it serves as a basis for successful communication with speakers of the target language.

One cannot visualize, even tentatively, what can be accomplished by the end of Level II unless one has in mind a notion of what will have been done in Level I. And one will want to have in mind what ought to be rounded out in Levels

III and IV, in order to say what ought to be completed in Level II. A brief, tentative statement of standards for the sociocultural component at Levels I, III and IV, modified from the 1967 draft of the North Carolina foreign-language guidelines (Ladu, 1967, in the Bibliography of the present paper), is embodied in this report, as the best way of providing needed background for the discussion of Level II.

The persons listed at the end of the report agreed to serve as members of a temporary committee on the problem. They were shown the statement borrowed from the North Carolina guidelines draft, Levels I through IV. Mrs. Tora T. Ladu, State Supervisor of Foreign Languages, generously permitted this use of the draft. The committee members were asked to elaborate the statement for Level II, and the chairman of the committee has undertaken to put together the thoughtful replies he received.

Some members of the committee have thought the North Carolina statement for Level II was overambitious; others, that it called for less than is needed. In reconciling the responses, therefore, two versions of the standard have been distinguished: "minimal" and "desirable." We should set the standard as high as we can, in view of the many students who still do not go beyond Level II of any foreign language. The minimal standard may in fact be needed by some schools, at lease for a few years, as a step toward a program which will meet the desirable standard. Meanwhile the lower standard may be useful as a core of understanding that can be

counted on, if no more can be assured in the near future, for the purpose of so constructing courses and tests that students will no longer be the victims of bad articulation as they transfer from one school system or from one teacher to another.

Dr. Jerald Green, a member of the committee, has argued convincingly that the reader needs to have in mind, finally, the practical procedures proposed for integrating the teaching of cross-cultural understanding into the teaching of the language. For only against this background can a teacher judge the feasibility of solving the pedagogical problems, supposing that we would be able to produce the knowledge of what can most truthfully be said about a culture.

The present report assumes that the insights it calls for are not to occasion any use of English in class; and that the insights called for will be taught through a combination of (1) audiolingual dialogues, presented orally and audiovisually, embodying significant social situations and cultural manifestations as well as language structures; (2) homework exercises, in English at first, explaining the patterns and key terms; (3) simple but good literature (including a few popular songs) presented on tape, in filmed recitations, or in print; (4) class discussions based on the homework exercises and kept within the students' capacity to use the foreign language; (5) optional reading in related fields of individual interest, from sources suggested in the homework instructions and available at the

school or public library; (6) planned coordination between the foreign-language sequence and the concomitant and prior sequences: (a) the history sequence, (b) the social studies sequence (particularly for concepts used in analyzing a sociocultural system), (c) the language-arts sequence (English and American literature in their sociocultural as well as world-literature context), (d) music, (e) art, (f) the manual arts (styles and the artisan tradition in the foreign society), and (g) cooking and sewing.[1.]

1. For further possibilities of cooperation beyond the teaching faculty, see the section on "Professional Roles of Contributors Toward the Student's Cross-Cultural Understanding" in the North Carolina foreign-language guidelines (Ladu, 1967).

PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR LEVELS I THROUGH IV

(Revised from Ladu, 1967. See the Partial Bibliography appended to this Report)

Note: Except in section I. 2, where the student's reading and response are to be in English, all of the verbal responses called for are to be in the foreign language, as are the literary texts (and of course the dialogues and songs) referred to. It is anticipated that on the first Levels, English will be used in a gradually diminishing portion of the homework exercises and background reading or other co-curricular activities. No written response in the language is called for until Level III.

Level I

I. 1. Proprieties of the Foreign Culture

The student will be able to describe (in the foreign language), or demonstrate physically, how to behave according to the proprieties of the foreign culture in the following common situations:

Greetings, introducing a person, thanking, saying goodbye, eating (rudiments of table manners), conduct toward persons of one's own and of higher social status. These proprieties include the distinction between formal and informal terms of address, handshaking, and the avoidance of any conduct considered impolite in these situations.

I. 2. Leisure-time activities

The student will be able to describe in English two of the more common leisure-time activities of adolescents in the foreign society.

I. 3.. Literature

The student will be able to

I.3. 1 recite one stanza of a poem

I.3. 2 tell simply how it illustrates some aspect of the culture.

I. 4 Songs

The student will be able to
I.4. 1 sing or recite one stanza of each of three folksongs (may include Christmas carols)

I. 4.2 Comment simply on the artistic value of the songs and their place in the culture.

Level II

Minimal Standard

The student will be able to do the following in addition to the expectations for Level I:

II. 1 Themes of the culture

State orally a simple definition and an illustrative instance for each of any four main themes of the foreign culture.[2] The illustrative instance may be a recall or paraphrase of a dialogue or a narative studied.

For French culture, the teacher could select four of twelve proposed main themes: l'individualisme, l'intellectualité, l'art de vivre, le réalisme, le bon sens, l'amitié, l'amour, la famille, la religion, la justice, la liberté, la patrie.[3] Among the main themes of Hispanic culture the following have been suggested: individualism, dignidad, orientation toward persons, serenidad, beauty, leisure valued over work, human nature mistrusted, "cultura" despite "la realidad del medio", rising expectations.[4]

2. In every culture, a dozen or so main themes can be formulated inductively. The anthropologist Morris Opler has suggested that the main themes are unconsciously kept this few because each theme enters around a value; value conflicts consequently multiply as new themes emerge; and such conflicts are painful. The ability to interpret the behavior of culture-bearers in the light of recurrent themes constitutes one distinguishing

characteristic of persons who understand a culture in its own terms.

II. 2 Literature

II.2.1 Recite one stanza of a second poem (in addition to the one called for in I.3).

II.2.2 Comment simply on the artistic features and/or historical significance of a prose work or selection, several pages in length, which he has read or has studied on tape or in filmed recitation.

II.2.3 State orally how each selection or work studied illustrates some theme (s) or other pattern(s) of the foreign people's culture or social relations.

II. 3 Songs

II.3.1 Sing or recite one stanza of a national anthem, and one stanza of a contemporary popular song.

II.3.2 Comment simply on the meaning of the songs.

II. 4 The family

State orally the salient features of what "the family" means to a middle-class person of the foreign society (e.g., emphasis on parents and children only, or on extended family; typical attitudes or activities illustrating how close the family ties are).

3. Definitions embodying critical reactions to successive drafts are summarized in Nostrand, 1967, Part A Sections I.A, "A la recherche des thèmes majeurs de la civilisation française contemporaine, "and I.C, Le substrat des croyances inhérentes à la conscience collective française." These sections are further condensed in English, in Ladu, 1967.

4. Very brief characterizations appear in Nostrand, 1961.

II. 5 Education

State orally or illustrate (by instances quoted or paraphrased from dialogues or other materials studied) what "school" means to the learner's age-mates in the foreign society.

II. 6. Interaction with the geographical setting

State orally how the main groups of inhabitants in two contrasting regions, within the culture area, adapt to some main features of their environment, and utilize its resources in the pursuit of their culture's values.

Desirable Standard

The student will be able to do the following in addition to the Minimal Standard:

II.21 Themes of the culture

II.21.1 Define and illustrate two additional (a total of six) main themes. The definition will go beyond a simple statement to include the stating of a few component value-concepts and underlying assumptions. (See footnote 3, above.)

II.21.2 Recognize obvious manifestations of the six selected themes in an unfamiliar dialogue, literary text, or visual representation of non-verbal behavior.

II. 22 Literature

Relate the works studied and their authors (if known), to a type of art form and/or a moment of sociocultural history.

II. 23 Songs

II.23.1 Describe orally the place of the popular song in the contemporary foreign society (entertainment and/or satire, kinds of social gathering, kinds of singer).

II. 24 The family

II. 24.1 State orally the salient social-class differences in the meaning of "the family" to the person.

II. 24.2 State orally the main norms that prescribe the behavior toward one another of the father, mother, son, daughter,brothers, and sisters, in the middle-class family.

II. 25 Education

State orally the chief characteristics of the educational system(s) in the culture area.

Level III

In addition to the "Desirable Standard" for Level II, the student will be able to do the following:

III. 1 Themes of the culture

Define or recognize all the main themes of the value system in the manner indicated under II.21.1 and II.21.2.

III. 2 Literature

III.2.1 On the basis of sufficiently long selections read (or studied in filmed recitations) from the works of ten major authors of the culture area, state orally or in writing the chief preoccupation(s) -- artistic, social and/or philosophical -- observed in the writing of any of the ten authors.

III.2.2 Identify or describe the main cultural or societal patterns in passages quoted by the examiner, or recalled from memory, drawn from the selections read (cf. III.2.1).

III.2.3 Comment on artistic qualities of form or style, under the conditions indicated in section III.2.2.

III.2.4 Paraphrase a passage quoted by the examiner from the literary works read in class, showing by the paraphrase or by accompanying comments the import he ascribes to the passage.

III. 3 Social structure

Give a brief, prepared talk on any two of the following: the political, judicial, educational, and economic institutions of the foreign country, the status of women or of adolescents in the society, the status of the main religious or ethnic minorities.

III. 4 Interaction with the geographical setting

State orally or in writing how the main groups of inhabitants in four additional ecological regions (in addition to the two selected for section II.6) adapt to main features of their environment and utlilize its resources in the pursuit of their culture's values.

Level IV

In addition to the expectations for Level III, the student will be able to do the following:

IV.1 Write a brief account of any main culture pattern, social institution, or ecological feature of the people's mode of life.

IV.2 While the first three Levels should avoid contrastive analysis as far as practicable, in order to assure first that the learner overcomes the ethnocentric view of the foreign as eccentric, by the end of Level IV the learner should be able to describe any of the indicated patterns in relation to the corresponding patterns in his own country.

IV.3 Literature

Respond as indicated in III.2 concerning twenty authors (instead of ten), on the basis of reading that includes one major novel and one major play.

IV.4 Summarize main trends and characterize main movements in the social and cultural history of the people.

(At Level V and beyond, students should broaden and deepen their initial acquaintance with the literautre, the history, and the regional, class, ethnic and age-group differences within the sociocultural whole.)

Members of the PNCFL committee on A Level-Two Standard Regarding the Understand of the Foreign Culture:

*[5] Jermaine D. Arendt, Consultant, Modern Foreign Languages, Minnesota Department of Education

Nelson D. Brooks, Yale University

* Eugenio Chang-Rodriquez, University of Miami

* Cecil Clark, College of Education, University of Washington

* Brownlee Sands Corrin, Political Science, Goucher College

* Genevieve d'Haucourt, Arlington, Va.

* Pia Friedrich, University of Washington

* Jerald Green, Associate in Foreign Languages Education, New York State Education Department

Ronald Hilton, Stanford University

* Tora Tuve Ladu, State Supervisor of Foreign Languages, Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina

Paul McRill, Director, Washington (State) Foreign Language Program

Madeleine Monod, University of Alberta

* Frances B. Nostrand, University of Washington

* Howard Lee Nostrand, University of Washington (Chairman of the Committee)

Douglas V. Parker, University of Alberta

William Merritt Read, University of Washington

* Lee Sparkman, Columbus, Ohio

* Ruth White, University of British Columbia

5. Asterisks indicate the members who have contributed to the report. Professor Cecil Clark has helped greatly to express the standards in terms designed to permit testing.

Partial Bibliography

See also FLAnnals for the annual installments, beginning in 1967-68, of the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 62 Fifth Ave., New York City, 10011) bibliography, particularly under the following headings: Section III, The Culture; Section IV, The Teaching of Foreign Literature; Section IX, Testing. In the list below, the topic of measuring attitude changes is included: it is inescapably relevant, though excluded from the standards stated above.

Banathy, Bela H.

A Theory of Selection and Organization of Content in Foreign Language Curricula. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1967. Dissertation Abstracts 27:3767A-68A.

Brown, Roger William, Eugene Galanter, Eckhard H. Hess, and George Mandler.

New Directions in Psychology. N. Y.:Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963. See Chapter 1, "Models of Attitude Change," by R. W. Brown

Buros, Oscar Krisen, ed. The Sixth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Highland Park, New Jersey: Gryphon Press, 1965. (For reviews of specific tests, e.g. in each language; and for reviews of research on "Character and Personality," including attitudes.)

Krech, David, Richard S. Crutchfield, and Egerton L. Ballachey. Individual in Society: A Textbook of Social Psychology Chapter 7 "The Changing of Attitudes," pp. 215-269.

Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962.

(Seven variables that affect the modifiability of an attitude; four means of changing attitudes, and the variable conditions affecting each means. Very readable exposition,

"... of the attitudinal characteristics ...exanubed (in the two preceding chapters), the most important in determining attitude modifiability are...

(1) extremeness,

(2) multiplexity,

(3) consistency,

(4) interconnectedness,

(5) consonance,

(6) strength and number of wants served by the attitude,

(7) centrality of the value to which the attitude is related." p. 216

"Attitude change is brought about through exposure to additional information, changes in the group affiliations of the individual, enforced modification of behavior toward the object, and through procedures which change personality." p. 225

Lado, Robert.

Language Testing: The Construction and use of Foreign Language Tests; a Teacher's Book. New York: Longmans, 1961.

"How to Test Cross-Cultural Understanding" Chapter 20, pp. 275-289.

[Ladu, Tora T.] . Draft of new guidelines for foreign-language teachers, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction,

presented for discussion at State conference of foreign-language teachers, December, 1967.

Lindzey, Gardner, ed.
Handbook of Social Psychology. Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1954. See especially Chap. 9, "Attitude Measurement," by Bert Green, pp. 335-366. Bibliography, pp. 366-369.
[A classic summary of the methods for measuring attitude change.]

Nostrand, Howard L.
"Literature, Area Study and Hispanic Culture." Hispania, Vol. 44, September, 1961, pp. 465-472. Same study published in Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature. No. 10, 1961, pp. 49-58.

_____.
Film-Recital of French Poems; Cultural Commentary. (With Marie-Georgette Steisel and others). University of Washington Department of Romance Languages and Literature, and Audio-Visual Services, 1964. 183pp.
[Available from the University of Washington Press, Seattle, Washington 98105.]

Editor and Project Director,
Background Data for the Teaching of French. Part A, La Culture et la Société Francaises au XX^{e} Siècle, pp.xi-743. Part B, Exemples Littéraires, pp. iii-70. Part C, Contemporary Culture and Society in the United States, pp. iii-130. Final Report of Project OE-6-14-005. Seattle: University of Washington, 1967. Mimeographed. Microfiches through Educational Resources Information Center.

Seelye, H. Ned. [Northern Illinois University, DeKalb]

An Objective Measure of Acculturation: Americans in Guatemala, A Case Study. Pre-Publication Draft, [1967.]

Tollinger, Suzanne, and Andre Paquette.

The MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests for Teachers and Advanced Students: A Professional Evaluation and Recommendation for Test Development. N.Y.: Modern Language Association of American, 1966. See pp. 140 and ff.

_____.

A Comparison of the MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests for Teachers and Advanced Students with the MLA Foreign Language Cooperative Tests. N.Y.: Modern Language Association of American, 1966.

Upshur, J. A.

"Cross-cultural Testing: What to Test." Language Learning, Vol. 16,3/4, 1966, pp. 183-96.

[Takes as point of departure H. Ned Seelye, Language Learning, Vol. 16, 1/2, 1966, pp. 77-85. According to Language Teaching Abstracts, Vol.1 (No. 1, Jan.) 1968, (Cambridge University Press), abstract #68-27, p. 18, Upshur distinguishes four aims of testing:

(a) to determine how examinee would perform in a situation;

(b) to predict how examinee would perform in future;

(c) to estimate examinee's present status on some variable external to the test;

(d) to infer the degree to which examinee has a given quality. Consequent prescriptions for test construction.]